Harold Weisberg

Meachum wrong on Israel

3/27/97

Roy Meachum, who has more pairs of feet for his own shooting than cats have lives, shoots them both repeatedly in his March 11 column pretendedly on the death of Menachem Begin but actually still again his vehicle for pro-Muslim, anti-Israel propaganda.

Boasting still again about his journalistic career and accomplishments, he says of the Camp David accords that "they removed the only potential adversary that really matters," i.e., Egypt. "Without Cairo, Tel Aviv's other enemies cannot hope to make good on that tired old propaganda wheeze, to push Israel into the sea."

In Arab propaganda Tel Aviv is Israel's capital. In fact, Jerusalem is.

That heavily-armed Iraq, Syria, Iran and Saudi Arabia in particular can't do this is ludicrous. With his unerring instinct this Meachum column appeared the very day other papers reported that a North Vietnamese ship escaped U.S. Navy efforts to intercept it and landed in Iran with a cargo of advanced Scud missiles for Syria and Iran.

Has Meachum forgotten that when he was fighting the Gulf war for his own survival and Israel was not in that war, Saddam Hussein rained his Scuds on Israel?

From what enemy does Syria's dictator, one of the bloodiest in the Muslim world in which they are not uncommon, need Scuds to defend himself, more advanced missiles that can have nuclear and chemical bacteriological warheads?

Who, when the U.S. has so thoroughly defeated Saddam Hussein, is going to attack Iran?

Why has Saudi Arabia obtained warplanes with a range that includes far-away Greece and parts of what was the U.S.S.R. and why has it asked for ownership of the advanced weapons the U.S. took there to defend it in the Gulf war?

The only Muslim-world need for advanced weaponry is for use against Israel and all that prevents the effort is fear of the havoc Israel can inflict in retaliation.

Is it because wiping Israel out is only "that tired old propaganda wheeze" that save for Egypt the entire Muslim world remains in a state of war with Israel from the day it was established, through all the wars it lost to Israel? Is that why destroying Israel remains in the PLO's charter? Or why the Muslim world boycotts all who do business with Israel?

Meachum says it is "natural" for him to object to Israel's costly invasion of Lebanon to protect its northern border from endless Arab terrorism and to drive the PLO away from it "because I object to all killing."

Any reflection of this is missing from his innumerable columns condemning Israel without condemning, even reporting, the simply enormous slaughter of Arabs by Arabs. On single days more Arabs killed other Arabs in Lebanon than were killed in the entire intifada. On a single day Saddam killed more than 10 times as many as died in the entire intifada with poison gas attacks on his own people.

Syria's Assad equaled or exceeded this slaughter of his own people also on a single day because he believed those who lived in the city he decimated opposed him.

The greatest tragedy of the Muslim world is fratricide, not the existence of Israel.

There is no peace in the Middle East only because the Muslim world is determined that there be no peace there. This and its fierce determination to end Israel, the only true democracy in the area, is the only reason not a single Muslim state agreed to any peace treaty after loosing all those wars against Israel.

Meachum "objects to all killing"? Is this why he has yet to "object" to any Arab attack on Israel, to any of the perpetual Arab terrorism? Is this why he hailed Arab terrorists as the moral equivalent of George Washington?

However one may feel about the

Arabs and Israelis: A history of conflict

Key to achieving peace in the Middle East after the Gulf war is settling the dispute between the Arabs and the Israelis. Its history, issues:

Arab position:

- Egypt, Syria and Jordan want Israel to return occupied lands
- Palestinians, many of whom live in Israeli-occupied lands, seek homeland

Israeli position:

- Wants all Arab nations to recognize its statehood, as Egypt has
- Politically divided: Likud (government party) opposes return of occupied lands; Labor Party advocates peaceful agreement with Arabs, Palestinians

History of conflict:

1947: United Nations divides Palestine into Jewish and Arab zones

1948: Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan attack Israel; Israel gains territory

1956: Israel, Britain, France attack Egypt after Egypt nationalizes Suez Canal; U.N. settles dispute

1967: Six-Day War with Egypt, Jordan, Syria; Israel claims Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, West Bank, Golan Heights

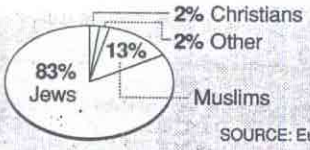
1973: Yom Kippur War; Egypt, Syria attack Israeli forces along the Suez Canal

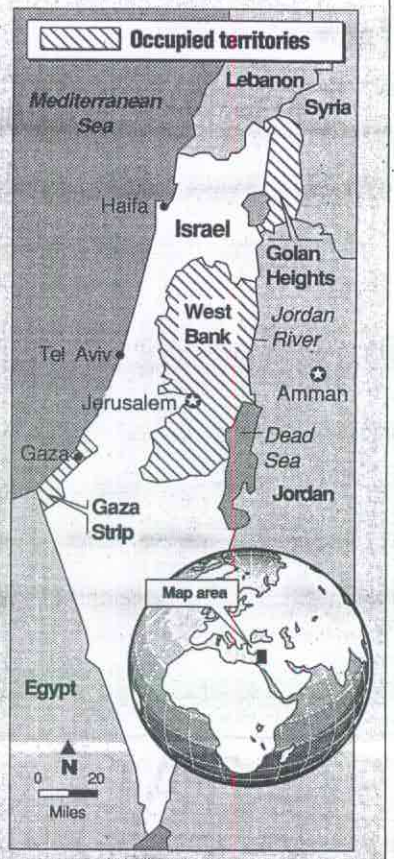
1979: Egypt, Israel sign peace treaty

1982: Israel completely withdraws from Sinai Peninsula

1988: Palestinian uprising ("intifada") begins in Israeli-occupied territories

Religious groups in Israel
(excluding occupied territories)





SOURCE: Europa Yearbook, World Book; Research by PAT CARR

great tragedy of the Middle East, understanding of it by Americans can come only from their being truthfully and accurately informed.

We cannot believe any of Meachum's columns on the Middle East. They are all Arab propaganda. I can't recall a single one that wasn't, or when he reported on the Middle East accurately and truthfully.

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